

From: [Jim Murphy](#)
To: [PLLCApplications](#)
Cc: [Jim Murphy - Retired](#)
Subject: Murphy's comment on conduit for Landmarks Commission
Date: Sunday, May 8, 2022 10:01:48 AM

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Landmarks Commission Members,

While there are still many things in Chapter 41 that I do not agree with, LORC made their decisions.

However, I do continue to object to:

"41.25 STANDARDS FOR ALTERATIONS (7) Building Systems (c) Lighting and Electrical Systems. 3. Exterior mounted conduit on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited."

While I can support this language for Additions and New Structures, it is not feasible for Alterations.

If the issue is the electrical line coming in from the utility pole, as staff knows from conversations with Madison Gas and Electric, it is not Chapter 41 that dictates where electric service will enter a home, it is the utility providing the feed from the closest and least expensive cable run from the power pole. Chapter 41 cannot tell the utility where to bring in power, especially on small urban lots in our historic districts. And the electrical code requires that the electrical meter be accessible on the exterior of the home, fed by that cable in conduit from the pole to the meter, all of which is often visible in the developed public right-of-way.

If the issue is remodeling that includes exterior conduit for additional electrical circuits, air conditioning etc, I refer you back to the Preservation Planner's comments more than once that historic homes are "not museums ." The homes we live in need to be modernized and that may sometimes require conduit to be run on exterior walls - maybe even visible from the developed public right-of-way. Conduit runs on non visible elevations or even via more expense and disruptive interior walls is not always feasible nor desirable. We are not museums.

If the intent is for staff and the Landmarks Commission to allow for such placement via exception to this rule, I strongly suggest that is bad public policy. First, it would violate ordinance language. Second, most people reading that language would believe there is an outright prohibition, not knowing that a possibility for an exception exists – violating a goal of this rewrite, which is to add clarity.

Do you live in an air conditioned home with plenty of electrical power throughout the house? Why do you not wish those of us in the 5 historic districts to do so too if the most effective way to do that would require conduit visible from the developed public-right-of way?

As I have requested a number of times, if you wish to discourage visible conduit, use language such as "... is discouraged." To prohibit is just plain wrong on homes that are on small lots and may have few options for such upgrades to bring our homes into the 21st century.

Change: “is prohibited” to “is discouraged,” at least for alterations. LORC refused to make this change - please do make the same mistake.

I ask the Preservation Planner to provide you with the conversations she had with Madison Gas and Electric. Heather, if I misstated MGE’s point of view, let me know and I will apologize.

Thank you,

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